The Impact of Caregiver and Community Education On Influenza Vaccination Acceptance

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Introduction: Pediatric populations are particularly vulnerable to influenza, and rely on parental approval of the pediatric influenza vaccine (PIV). We conducted a survey to better understand our community’s perspective on the PIV.

Methods: An urban pediatric clinic’s records were gathered for the 2017-2019 flu seasons (i.e., pre-survey period). Surveys were distributed during the 2019-2020 flu season to assess vaccination status and their reasoning for acceptance or rejection of the PIV for their child(ren). Children vaccination rates were divided into 3 groups: 6 months-3 years, 3-5 years, and 5-18 years.

Results: During the 2017-2018 flu season, the overall vaccination rate (n=1791) was 34.1%. For the 2018-2019 flu season, the overall vaccination rate (n=1795) was 41.7%. During the 2019-2020 flu season, the overall vaccination rate (n=1620) increased to 45.3%. This was a statistically significant increase from 2018-2019 flu season (p=0.035).

The most common reason to vaccinate was, "I do not want my child to get the flu/the shot reduces the likelihood of child getting the flu" (52.2% in <5 years age group, 56.5% in >5 years age group). The most common reason to not vaccinate was, "I do not want the flu shot for my child" (35.7% in <5 years age group, 38.6% in >5 years age group).

Discussion: Understanding community perceptions will allow for efficacious educational materials and allow healthcare providers to tailor their strategies for the sake of preventive medicine and community health.